

THE
Witch of the Woodlands :
OR, The
Coblers New Translation ;
Written by L. P.

Here Robin the Cöbler for his former evils,
Was punisht worst then Faustus was with de-
(vils.



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THE Witch of the Woodlands:

O R,
The Coblers New Translation.

CHAP. I.

IN the Milde of Kent, not far from Rumney
Marsh there dwelt a merry-conceited Cob-
ler, commonly called Robin the Devill, which
afterwards came to be called, The Witch of the
Woodlands. This Cöbler alwayes had a spe-
ciall care to please his Customers, but chiefly
he would be sure that if any pretty Wench
brought him a job to doe, he would go through
stitch with her worke first of all; He could jest
and be merry in companie; he could sing in
his Shop like a Nightingale; he could cut a ca-
per with Jack Pudding, and was not much in-
feriour to lusty Laurence, which got eighteen
wenches with childe all in one yeare, for it was
well knowne that he got three wenches with
childe all in one night; but as the Proverb goes,
The Pitcher that goes often to the water, may
at last come broken home: And the sweetest
meat requires the sowrest sawce: So it fared
with Robin the Cöbler, for one of his wenches

being suddenly brought to bed with a male childe, the Mother of the Damosell serued Robin the Cobler with a Warrant, and made him to marry her daughter out of hand ; then was the poore Cobler fallen into a pecke of troubles, and knew not how to behaue himselfe : For though he had been Factor for Mars, yet he neuer was made a Vulcan befoze that time ; And now must he provide for cloutes and whistles, fire and candle, sope and starch, white bread and milke, a nurse and a cradle, with many other matters which belongs to married men to looke after ; But as it is in the Proverbe, That one ill chance followes another, So was it with him for the other two Damosels which he had formerly made use of, now began to make use of him, and brought him two children more to keepe, which was done both on one day ; which when Robin the Cobler did behold, he fell into such a fearfull quantarie, so that the people that beheld him, said that he lookt so pittifully upon the matter, that they thought in their mindes that he would never be good againe.

Then began Robin with dolesfull words, with weeping eyes, and with wringing hands to bewaile his former follies, saying, O silly rogne that I am, was it not enough for me to sing, dance, drinke Ale, breake Cakes, talke and be merry amongst Maids ? but that I must like a Towne-Bull, over-run all that stand in my way,

way, and so in the end he poulded for my break-
ing loose; now am I in a worse case then Por-
rage John, Marret the Lawyer, or the Colw-
keeper of the Pinder of Wakefield; I would
that my Father had never begot me, then
should I never have begotten so many wenches
with childe; or else I would that some honest
Sow-gelder had done his office upon me to

Here Robin for his former Letchery,
Doth suffer in his Members grievously.



keep me honest, then had I scap't the misery
now I am sure to endure: Now whilst Robin
A 3 the

the Cobler was making this sorrowfull lamentation, a friend of his whispered him in the eare, and gave him counsell to be gone from them all, saying, That one paire of heeles is worth two paire of hands; whose counsell Robin tooke, as you shall heare in the following Chapter.

CHAP. II.

RObin the Cobler having hearkned to his friends advice, made no more to doe of the matter, but truss up his Tools to be gone, resolving to come for London, and there to worke Journey-worke till such time that his children were come to be men, and able to worke for themselves; but as he passed along the Countrey, which is called the Wilde of Kent, he lost his way in the Woodlands, when night was almost come upon him, and finding no path to guide him, he wandzed up and downe till it was almost ten of the clocke in a pittisfull cold frosty darke Winters night: but at the last he heard a Cocke crowe, whereby he understood that there was some dwelling house near at hand, and so being somewhat comforted to heare the crowing of the Cocke, he made his approach to the house, and knocking at doore, there came forth an old woman with a dish clout bound

bound about her head, and a staffe in her hand,
and demanded of Robin to know what he
knockt for; Good Mother, quoth he, I am a poore
distressed Traveller which hath lost my way,
and willing would I be to give six pence for a
Bed this night to lay my weary bones on:
Harry, quoth she, all the beds that I have are
not worth six pence, for I have no more then
what I lye on my selfe, but if thou wilt take
paines to doe as I doe, thou and I will lye to-
gether for once, where we will hug one another
as the Devill hugg'd the Witch: Robin behol-
ding and taking notice of her person all the
body over, saw that she was long-nos'd, bleare-
ey'd, crooked-neckt, wyrm-mouth'd, crump-
shoulder'd, bawle-brow'd, thin-belly'd, bow-
legg's, and splay-footed: He began to frame
an excuse, saying, Good Mother, I pray you
to consider this, that I am a Batchelour, and
never came in bed with any woman since I
was borne of my Mother; Wilt thou sweare
that that which thou speakest is true: I will,
quoth Robin, whereupon he heard a hollow
voise, as if it came out of the top of a Chim-
ney, crying three severall times, Robin the
Cobler is mine, Robin the Cobler is mine;
Robin the Cobler is mine; These words
when he heard, he thought that some the-devill
was come to fetch him away alive, and pre-
sently he fell into such a trembling condition,

that his hands thoke, his pulses beat, his heart panted, his head aken, his nose droopt, his belly rumbled, and a certain parcell of melting teares droopt out of the lower ends of his breeches, and so falling downe upon his knees to the old woman, desired her to let him have a lodging, how she would, or where she would, then the old woman took him in, and with a remnant of water which she had kept a long time in a Chamber-pot for that purpose, she washt him from the crowne of the head to the sole of the feet, and made him as white as if he had washt him in puppy-dog-water, and so they went lovingly to bed together; what followed after shall be related in the ensuing discourse.

CHAP. III.

After that Robin the Cobler had taken his first sleep, he awaked, and turning himselfe on the other side, he sent for his Bed-fellow, but she was not there; and having gotten all the Bed-room to himselfe, he began to wonder with himselfe about the passages which had hapned to him the night before, and there-withall he bethought himselfe how he might use a meanes to get away before the old Witch his new-made Landlady came backe againe to him, for he supposed that she had gone forth to fetch

fetch companie to cut his throat ; but whilst
 he was thus thinking, in came the old woman
 with three more of her Disciples, with every
 one of them a light Torch in her hand, cry-
 ing out all at once, that they would be reben-
 ged on Robin the Cobler for all his Whore-
 hunting tricks : These foure female Witches
 could transforme themselves into any humane
 shape at their owne pleasure ; so she that Ro-
 bin took to be his mother-in-law, brought in
 an ugly Beare at her heels, another brought a
 ravening Wolfe, and the third brought a sharp
 long broad bladed knife ; perce Robin, al-
 though the weather was cold, and the Bed-
 clothes very thin, yet he was hot enough : for
 being in a stinking feare, he covered himselfe
 over head and eares, all save one hole that was
 in the cover-lid, which he now and then closely
 peept out at, but durst not to stir for his life ;
 but now begins the game, The grand Witch
 of the Companie, otherwise called the Land-
 lady of the house, put her hand under the bed,
 and pulled out a Taper and a Pipe, and plaid
 such a fit, that it lasted till it was within two
 houres of day ; all this while the other three
 Witches danc'd the Irish Hay with their heels
 upwards, meane time perce Robin the Cobler
 lay abed and bewist himselfe, till at last two
 quarts run through the bed upon the ground,
 whether it were done for joy, or for feare, He
 leave

leade that to other such as himselfe to consider
of ; but when the Musicke was ended, the
Beare began to roze, and the Wolfe began to
howle for food, then said the old Witch, I have
in the house the bravest breakfast for your two
Familiars that they have feasted on ever
since they deboured the two damnable Whores
which were bewitcht as they rode in a Coach
towards a Bawdy-house in London ; and
now since that Witches have power of none
but Swearers and Cursers, Thieves and dis-
semblers, Pimps, Bawds and panders, whores
and Whore-hunters, and such like manner of
people, let us make the best use of our time
that we may : And now you shall see what a
gallant prize I have lighted upon by chance :
There was a merry disposed Cobler, which
dwelling not far from the Towne of Rumney,
who was every day used to drinke, swagger,
swear and domineere, and oftentimes he would
say that he car'd not a turd for all the Witches
in the World, and that he had a trick to de-
fend himselfe from the power of Witches ;
which was by washing his hands, and saying
his Prayers every morning before he went
forth of the doores ; but although he served
God in the morning, he served the Devill ere
night ; for there was hardly one day in the
weeke, but he would goe a whozing, and often-
times he would intice honest Wenchcs to sinne
by

by his dissembling speeches, and his false so:
swearing himselfe, making them believe, that if
he got them with child, he would marry with
them; amongst the rest, he got three **Widdowes**
daughters with child, all in one night, making
every one of them believe, and swearing that
he would marry with them the morrow after,
which he never did intend, but at last Good-
wife Webb the **Widdow** forc'd him to marry
her daughter; which being done, the other two
Wenches which he had gotten with child, be-
ing delivered, brought him their two children
to keep, so as he got them all three with child
in one night, so they brought him three children
to keep in one day; these things he thought
that **Witches** had not knowne, but my **Imps**
spent not their time in vaine, for I every night
sent forth my familiar **Imp** Madge of Wake-
field, in the likeness of a blacke Cat, which
told me of every thing that Robin the Cbler
did doe; but the archest piece of Roguerie that
ever he did in all his life, was done to a **Wid-**
dow woman in the Isle of Thanet, for he pro-
mis'd her marriage, and made her sell her
Widdowes **Cate** for foure and twenty pound,
and told her, that if she woul'd lend him the
money to buy him Leather, that he would be
married to her on Thursday next, and wisht,
that if he did not see according to his promise,
that he might be fi:ne in pierts with **Wolbes**
and

and Beares, but he never came backe to the
 Widdow againe ; And last of all he run away
 from his Wife and thre Childzen, and now he
 lies under that Coverlid : When the other
 thre Witches had heard this discoverie, they
 all leapt for joy, and the thre familiar spirits
 which went in the shape of a Wolfe, a Beare,
 and a blacke Cat, were ready to teare the Wit-
 ches to pieces for victuals, they were so hun-
 gry ; then said one of them to the rest, seeing
 hee with that hee might be devoured by
 Wolfes and Beares, he shall have his wish,
 and he shall presently be cut in quarters, and
 the Wolfe shall have his Heart, Liver, and
 Lungs for his breakfast, the Beare shall have
 his Paunch and Bowels, and the Cat shall
 have his privy members to gnaw upon : Nay,
 quoth the older Witch, it shall not be so, for
 he shall not have so pleasant a death as you
 speake of, but we will have a little more sport
 with him before he dyes : That very word
 procured some comfort to Robins languishing
 spirits ; for he had rather chuse to lead a sor-
 rowfull life, then to dye a sudden death : And
 now to be brieve in the matter, they pul'd the
 Bed-clothes from off him, and made him stand
 up starke naked as ever he was borne before
 them, the Wolfe bit him by the throat, the
 Beare bit him by the bum, and the Cat bit him
 by the members, and every one dyed bloud of
 him,

him, but did him no great harme at that time ;
 Now, said the old Witch, we have markt you
 for our owne, and therewithall she putt sentence
 upon him, that he should have three dayes pu-
 nishment for his former offences, and after-
 wards he was to be eaten up alive ; the first of
 the three dayes he was to be transformed into
 the shape of a Fox, and to be chased with Dogs
 from morning till night.

Here Robin the Cobler like a Fox doth run,
 Before the Dogs, whose rage he cannot shun.



The second day he was to be a riding Bag,
 and to carry the Witch toither she pleased :
 The third day he was to be an Owle, and to
 flye

fly from one place to another all the day long; so having agreed upon the matter, as soone as the day appeared, Robin the Cobler was to be a for, and so out of the doores they set him a running, and having transform'd themselves into the shape of dogs, followed close at his heeles, and every time they overtake him, they bit him by the buttockes, and nipt him most devillishly, for they had no mercy in their teeth.

The next day they transform'd him into the shape of a Horse, and so the Witches got upon his backe, three of them at a time, and rid him over hills and mountaines, through Rivers and Ponds, through all sorts of waters thicke and thin; and worst of all, they rid him through so many bushes, brambles, and briars, til they toze the very skin from the flesh of him; so that the Whoremasters blood of his run from him in many places, and yet were not his sorowes at an end, nor no man knows when they will be.

The third day they made an Owle of him, who flying up and down from Tree to Tree at noon time of the day, crying, whu, whu, whu, the birds came thick and threefold about him, wondering most strangely to see an Owle abroad by day light; wherefoze to fulfill the old Proverbe, they all fell upon him like Wyres upon an owle: And to be briefe, they pluckt his feathers, broke his wings, and pluckt out one of his eyes: This being done, the grand Witch consulting with the

the rest of the Witches, saying, That Robin the
Cobler had none enough of any conscience for
his wenching tricks, and so they turn'd him in-
to the shape of a Swan :

Here Robin by the vertue of a Swan,
Hath broke the Witches charmes, and is a
(man.



And last of all they withdrew their Inchan-
ting Spels, and so Robin the pittifull Cobler be-
came a man againe; but before he departed, they
made him to kneele downe, and kisse every one
of their fleshy parts, and therewithall they par-
ted household.

CHAP. IV.

How Robin the Cöbler having got loose from the Witches, became a new man, and of many notable exploits which he did, you shall pleasantly heare.

NOW when Robin the Cöbler had broken the spels of witchcraft, his eye-sight, his hearing, his speech, his senses, and his knowledge, was all restored unto him againe, but yet he lookt of a pittifull complexion, just as a man may say, like one of Pharaoh's leane kine; his visage was pale and ghastly, his eyes seemed as if they were sunke into his head, his nose was like the nose of a scoulding Ale-wife, long and sharp, and his tongue did gaggle, as if it had been made of the Devils bollock leather, his belly and his backe were so clung together, that he was scarce able to shitt for bones.

For had he any kind of Habit to put on that was worth the throwing to the dunghill, only an old towse smocke, and a paire of slip-shoes, which one of the Witches had given him out of her more pittifull charity; but yet he knew himselfe to be in a far more happer taking then he was in before, when he was ridden with thre the-devils at one time.

Then began Robin to ruminat, and to think what course he were best to take, and which way

was best for him to keere his helme, and at last
he resolved to take his journey once more for
the famous City of London, and to try if for-
tune would afford him any better lucke
then he had before; but he vowed that he
would keep along on the Road, and never goe
through the Woodlands any more, for feare lest
the Witches should meet with him again. Now
as he passed along on the way; in every Towne
and Village where he came, the boyes and the
Children would run away from him, thinking
that he had been mad, in so much that there was
not one idle boy or girl to be seen in the streets,
but here comes one, the very bitterest of all, poor
Robin the Cobler, having gone along on his
journey for the space of almost two wofull days
and nights, without bread or drinke, or money
to buy, he began to bewaile his sorrowfull life;
in this mournfull manner: Oh pittifull Cobler
that I am, for now I am in a worse case then
ever I was before. When I was a Horse, the
Witches did ride me, and put me to much pain,
but yet they gave me somewhat to feed upon
at night, though it were but branne and water,
which I can approve to be pretty good fare for
horses when they are very hungry, and so they
may have enough to fill their bellies withall.
When I was a Fox, the Witches in the shapes
of Dogs ran after me, and hurried me up and
downe, and at every stop and turne bit me by

the buttocks ; but now am I hungerbitten,
which is ten thousand times worse. When I
was an owle, I was most shamefully abused,
and wondered at by other birds ; but now am I
made a wondrous stocke to all the folks that
see me, insomuch that no man, woman nor
childe, will not nor dare not come anear me, long
of the poverty of my flesh, and disguise of habit.
Oh what a pittifull wretched case am I in now ;
An Ape, an Owle, a Fox, a Goose, a Horse, an
Ore or an Ass is in a far better taking then I
am in. And that I could with Diogenes dare
feed upon thistles, or like a Camelion, live by the
aire. Now whilst he was thus complaining,
by chance came along a blind Beggar man,
which had a whole Wallet full of fragments
of Fish and meat, and mambracks of Bread
and Cheese, which he had gotten amongst his
good benefactors. When Robin the Cobler had
sift his eyes upon the blind mans Wallet of
viuals, the very heart in his belly leapt for
joy, hoping that then he should fill his belly once
again, and thereupon taking courage upon
him, he made his addresse, and spake to the blind
Beggar man, by way of complement, knowing
that the blind man could not see what manner
of person he was, and so taking hold of him by
the shoulder, began to expresse his mind in this
manner: Well overtaken Father, how far walk
you this way, marry, quoth the Beggar, but to
the

the next Village, and so want of a Guide to leade me, I am in feare that I shall come too late to my lodging ; why quoth the Cobler, rather then you shall doe amisse, I will take the paines to lead you my selfe, for I love old men with all my heart.

CHAP. V.

Here followeth a discourse of the happy fortune that happened to Robin the Cobler after all his miseries.

As Robin the Cobler was leading the blind Beggar along on the way, the blind man found him to be exceeding diligent, and there-withall desired of Robin to know who he was that would undervalue himselfe to take paines to lead him ; Then quoth Robin, I am a Gentleman borne and bred, and so you would say if you could but see me ; but as it comes to passe, I have never a penny to help my selfe, for I have been a valiant Cavalier for the King, but by the fortune of the Wars I am utterly undone for ever, unlesse some speedy help come by heavenly Providence. I tell you Father, my Land not long since was sequestred, my goods and my money taken from me, and my body carried to prison, where I have lain thix years,

thre months, thre weeks, and thre dayes, and
 at the last, by happy chance I got out of prison;
 but now I am out I know not how to live, nor
 how to get one bit of bread to relieve my hun-
 gry stomacke, so; I have been fasting two days
 and nights, and never a bit of victuals came
 within my body: Alas so; you good Sir, said
 the Beggar, I much lament your case, but if
 you will be pleased to accept of such poore fare
 as I have in my Wallet, you shall be heartily
 welcome to it, and the next Alehouse that we
 come to I will give you liquoz of the best to



swallow it downe; whereupon the ~~W~~allet was laid downe, and the victuals sorted out upon the green banke. I thinke there was no need to bid Robin to eat, but when he had filled his belly away they went together cheerfully to the place appointed, where they lay lovingly together that night, and the next day the Beggar brought him home to his owne house, where was plenty of good clothes, both of ~~W~~ollen and Linnen, with which the Beggar suited Robin, and also directed him to a coffer where was two hundred and fifty pounds of ready money; All this quoth the Beggar, shall be your owne when I dye, if you will stay with me all my life time.

Whereupon the Cobler replied, with a very good will Sir; which bargain being made, Robin and his old Master would every day walke about to good mens houses, to see what victuals they could get, till at the last, Robin became as cunning at the Trade as his Master, and was acquainted with most of the Master-Beggars that lived in the County of Kent.

But to conclude, In proceſſe of time, the blind Beggar dyed, and then all his wealth fell to Robin, who afterwards went home to his former habitation, and tooke order for the breeding up of the three children that he got in one night,

night, and gave the two wenches ten pounds
apiece for the injury that he had formerly done
them, and threw the rest of the money into his
wife's lap, and so ended the story of Robin the
Cobler.

FINIS.

